



CLASSIC Garden Art

SPRING/SUMMER 2012

The
Bradford Times



Dear Neighbours,
On behalf of Council and staff of the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury, it is my pleasure to bring greetings by way of this information filled Garden Magazine.

Although we experienced a relatively mild winter and were grateful for the early hint of warm weather, I am thrilled to say that spring has officially arrived. No doubt most of you join me in eagerly anticipating sunny skies and the opportunity to spend quality time in our gardens and backyards with our family and friends. This year you will once again see colourful hanging baskets and barrel planters along with various municipal and facility gardens throughout our community. Maintenance of our town parks and municipal gardens for your enjoyment is a priority for our Leisure Services staff. The mill wheel on Holland Street and the heron

fountain on Barrie Street will again be adorned with a vibrant, colourful display of summer flowers.

To enjoy the beautiful outdoors we have a number of key events planned. The Town continues to participate in Community Clean Up Day, the Marsh Mash, the Mayor's Hike for Health and Carrotfest. The Town enthusiastically supports the Adapt a Park, Place, or Path program; a clean, green, litter free community initiative fostered by local families.

I wish all of our residents a wonderful spring and summer season and all the best in your gardening efforts around your own homes and workplaces.

Warmest regards,

Doug White

Mayor

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Carnival colours in your garden are hot, hot, hot

By Geoff Miller

(NC)—This gardening season, it's time to bring the tropics home. A new line of Rio Dipladenia flowers have arrived from Brazil. These blooms are hardy enough to thrive in Canadian summer gardens as individual plants or hanging baskets or planters.

"It seems like an oxymoron to put tropical and Canada in the same sentence," says Jeff Howe, president of Fernlea Flowers Ltd. "This Rio line

of tropical flowers is heat-and-cold tolerant and requires very little watering as they have tubers, like potatoes, that store their own water beneath the soil. It's a great choice, especially for people on the go who aren't available to water frequently at home or at the cottage."

He adds: "The Rio Dipladenia are a burst of hot carnival colours to punctuate a garden, hanging basket or container. Last year, gardeners loved experimenting with our tropical introductions, which were the colourful Mandevilla and Dipladenia flowers. In

addition to an expanded Rio line of flowers, we are adding a new line of tropical plants such as the Gran Nain and Red Abyssinian Banana plants, which give contrasting foliage in a landscape or planter."

The new Rio Pink, Hot Pink and Deep Red Dipladenia feature three trumpet-shaped blooms on each stem and are promised to enliven any gar-



den from mid-May to mid-October requesting little care.

"We've created tropical planters and hanging baskets for easy gardening" Howe continued. "In the middle of the tropical planter, we are featuring one of the new, hardy, and low maintenance tropical plants like the White Bird of Paradise, plus one of the Banana plant varieties, a Majesty Palm or the Dracaena Marginata Magenta all providing exotic foliage as a focal point. Around the edges of the planter are the colourful Dipladenia flowers surrounded by trailing vines."

Tropical planting and growing tips, as well as arrival times at your local retailer can be found online at www.fernlea.com.



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Lovely lavender is easy to grow

by Tim Lao

(NC)—Lavender, with its woody branches, green leaves and elegant purple flower, is a hardy perennial herb that can thrive in a garden with little maintenance. Its trademark soothing, fragrant scent originates from the oil in the lavender flower.

A gardener's favourite, lavender likes good, dry soil and full sun. It reaches about 12"-18" in height,

making it an excellent choice for garden hedges or borders. It can also provide a striking backdrop for smaller plants.

Lavender is more than 'just a pretty face'. The Greeks and Romans were the first to discover its medicinal purposes. Dried lavender flowers made into sachets are said to calm and relax insomnia sufferers and fussy babies into sleep. Lavender flowers are also a popular aromatherapy and potpourri ingredient. More information about planting lavender and caring for it during the season is available online at www.bonnieplants.ca.



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Behind the scenes, at Lakeview Gardens



And on May 5, owners Stephen and Gaynor Radcliffe, and son and daughter-in-law Rob and Rosemary Radcliffe, officially opened their new state-of-the-art, fully-automated retail greenhouse, built with an interest-free Green Energy loan from Nottawasaga Futures.

The structure was purchased from GGS - Greenhouse Growers Structures - in Vineland, and put together by the Radcliffe family. The greenhouse offers 24' by 54' of energy-efficient heated space, and during the warmer months, an automated ventilation system that gauges the temperature and opens or closes roof-top vents.

A ribbon-cutting with Innisfil's Mayor and members of Council officially opened the greenhouse, which was filled with bedding plants and hanging baskets for the coming season. The ribbon-cutting was part of Lakeview Gardens' annual Spring Preview – an opportunity to go behind the scenes, and tour a greenhouse operation that produces bedding plants, annuals, perennials, one of the widest selections of herbs and heritage vegetables in the region, and an estimated 3,000 dozen English cucumbers, sold at local farmers' markets, at the garden centre, or

*I*t's been a good year so far for Lakeview Gardens garden centre, in the small town of Lefroy, Innisfil.

Not only did the garden centre and greenhouses get publicity for a record-breaking kale, shown at the Royal Agricultural Fair in November, they were featured in a premier trade magazine – a 25-year retrospective that focused on the success of the family-run business in a world dominated by chains and large-scale operations.



Lakeview Gardens (cont'd)

trucked to the distribution centre in Toronto.

Andrew Radcliffe is the 3rd generation of Radcliffes at Lakeview Gardens. He took a group back to see the bedding plants that fill the original 100-year-old greenhouse on the property, still in use although the glass has been replaced with more durable, less-expensive plastic. The tour included a series of greenhouses that house an array of plants and seedlings, in various stages of development, and the apiaries that produce the centre's own brand of honey.

And despite the growth over the past 25 years, despite growing interest and a growing reputation, "We're still comparably small," he

said. Small enough, at any rate, to remain a family-run operation, and offer personalized service and tours.

Lakeview Gardens garden centre is located at 1712 Killarney Beach Road; for information call 905-456-5822 or visit lakeviewgardencentre.com



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Flowering basil is the king of herbs

by Katherine Stuart

(NC)—Discovered centuries ago in India and Iran, basil is considered the king of herbs. It is a rich source of vitamins A and C, calcium, iron, dietary fibre and other essential nutrients and minerals for optimum health.

With basil's dark green leaves and white or purple flowers, it can be a colourful focal point in a garden, a border, or in a herb container. To stimulate your senses, pinch off the flowers for a fresh, lemony aroma.



The varieties of basil range in flavour from sweet, to lemon, to Greek, to Thai - making it easy for the home chef to create a dazzling array of tastes in summer soups, salads, burgers, grilled meat and poultry, and of course, the piece-de-resistance—homemade pesto for pizza, pasta and bruschetta, fresh from the garden.

Check your local garden centre for varieties and other herb choices!

Grow your best tomatoes ever



By Jean Mare

(NC)— Cultivate your green thumb quickly by listening to the experts.

For example, Jeff Howe, president of Fernlea Flowers Ltd., knows a thing or two about growing the best tomatoes.

"I know gardeners are eager to get the season started," he says, "but the key to a bountiful tomato harvest is planting after the threat of frost has passed." When planning for your tomatoes, the following tips will give you the best results:

1. Choose an area that gets full sun.
2. Space tomato plants 47"-70" (1.2 - 1.8m) apart.
3. Stake plants for support as they can grow 47"-70" (1.2-1.8m) in height.
4. Soil must drain well and be moist. Use compost for great results.
5. Plant tomatoes deep into the ground. The deeper the root, the stronger they grow.

And he believes in companion planting:

"In a vegetable garden, did you know that tomatoes will thrive if grown near herbs like chives and parsley? But, equally important you should avoid planting them near cabbages or any of the potato family."

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How to maintain your Lawn this summer

You'll want to make sure you cut your lawn regularly - but bring in your lawn mower for an annual check-up to make sure that the blades are not dull. Dull blades can actually damage your lawn, by tearing instead of cutting the grass leaves, creating more opportunity for disease.

You will also want to make sure that your mower is set to the right height. You don't want to cut off more than one-third of the grass blades. The average lawn should have a height of 1 1/2" to 2" during the cooler months, and 2 to 3 1/4" during those really hot months; having a higher height setting on your mower is also cost effective, as it requires less watering.

Aerating helps the roots of your lawn to breathe easier. Roots require oxygen, and by aerating at the beginning of the season, you're helping your lawn off to a strong start.

Make sure to fertilize your lawn! Food always makes for a thicker green lawn. Apply once in early to late spring, and again in the fall.

With the ban on most weed killers, it is now a little more work to maintain a weed-free lawn. Applying corn gluten to your grass can help, as it will work to stop weeds from appearing. Iron-based products are



also available to apply directly to weeds during the season. And make sure to over-seed throughout the season: the more grass you have will help choke out unwanted visitors.

Last but definitely not least - water! Your lawn needs to be watered, especially during those dry hot spells in summer. This will require some monitoring and work. Towns now have water use by-laws which restrict using water freely - and if you are using a sprinkler it will constantly have to be moved around the yard. Investigating an irrigation system may appear costly in the beginning, but you can save a lot in the end.

Nothing looks better than a weed free, plush, green lawn.

Submitted by: Peter Ferragine, Ferragine Greenhouses, Simcoe Rd. in Bradford.

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Cartoons inspire the next generation of gardeners

(NC)—Arriving this spring, Growums for kids are designed to make growing their own food fun and educational.

“Cartoon characters like Coco (chocolate cherry tomato) and Duke the Cuke (straight eight cucumber) introduce children to gardening along with a healthy lifestyle and proper nutrition,” says Jeff Howe, president Fernlea Flowers Ltd. “They will love making some of their favourite meals – from pizza to tacos with veggies— with the produce they grow themselves.”

This year, Growums introduces eight veggies with cartoon character names, each with their own 4-inch biodegradable peat pot for children to plant. The varieties include: bell pepper, chocolate cherry tomato, mild jalapeno, sweet cherry tomato, sugar baby watermelon, all-star strawberry, straight eight cucumber and the yellow pear tomato. Young gardeners register their garden on the interactive website www.growums.com to receive weekly videos and care instructions.

Fun facts about each vegetable character's name and personality, various games, gardening tips, downloadable colouring book pages, and tools for track-

ing their garden's progress, will encourage children to explore the wonderful world of gardening.

The online presence is designed to ensure “that young gardeners can use their virtual skills complemented by their real life skills,” Howe says. “Kids will use their social media skills to learn the basics of how our food is grown and how it comes to the table, while getting their hands dirty too. Being a parent of young children, I see that it is essential at an early age, to make learning to eat healthy a fun and interactive process to engage our next generation of gardeners.”

Need Ideas?

Here are a few sites that will give you some great ideas for enjoying the garden with your children.

www.kiddiegardens.com

www.canadiangardening.com/how-to/gardening-with-kids

www.hmk.on.ca/gardeningforkids.html

www.icangarden.com/kidz.cfm



Green spaces deliver countless benefits to cities

(NC)—Consider for a moment whether you would rather be in a lush park or surrounded by concrete and asphalt. Studies show that not only are people more likely to enjoy communities that are nicely landscaped, they are also more likely to be physically active and to feel safe in those environments.

Other benefits of green spaces include:

- Increased pride in one's community;
- Higher levels of physical activity;
- Biodiversity thrives because food and habitat for wildlife is provided;
- Reduction in the warming effect of hard surfaces like concrete and asphalt.

But what happens when green spaces need protection from insects and weeds that threaten to overpower the desired plants?

Specialists suggest that the best way to control pests is through prevention. Ensure that the soil is healthy to begin with, and only plant those species that are robust and well-suited to the climate.

When problems do arise, there are a number of



organic choices - from botanical pesticides and herbicides, to the use of beneficial insects like nematodes, for the control of those nasty leatherjacket grubs that can devastate a lawn.

As for weeds, sometimes the old-fashioned method is best - just pull them up.

There are now some great

tools that can help the gardener weed!

Got ants - inside or out?

Plant mint! Any kind, plain, peppermint or spearmint they all work. Peppermint also makes a wonderful border along walkways or flower beds.

To keep ants from entering your house, plant peppermint right outside your doors.

Spraying the frames of your doors with the peppermint oil solution will also prevent ants from entering. The ants will stay away from peppermint oil, but only as long as the scent lasts, so it is definitely not a permanent answer to your problem - but for a short-term fix, it is very effective!

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Dazzle your guest with a cedar-planked appetizer

Recipe for the grill

(NC)—Any part of your meal can be barbecued to perfection. Take a look at this creative appetizer recipe by Jamie Purviance in his newest cookbook, *Weber's Smoke*:

Cedar-planked Brie with Cherry Chutney and Toasted Almonds

Ideal grill: Charcoal

Smoke intensity:
Moderate

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cooking time: about 10 minutes

Special equipment: 1 untreated cedar plank, 12 to 15 inches long and about 7 inches wide and ½ to ¾ inch thick, soaked in water for at least 1 hour

Serves: 4 to 6

Chutney

- 2 teaspoons vegetable oil
- 2 tablespoons minced yellow onion
- ½ teaspoon minced garlic
- 2 teaspoons peeled, minced fresh ginger
- ½ cup cherry preserves
- Ground cinnamon
- Crushed red pepper flakes
- 1 wheel (8 ounces) Brie cheese

¼ cup sliced almonds, toasted

Baguette slices or crackers

1. In a small, heavy-bottomed saucepan over medium heat, warm the oil. Add the onion and cook, stirring often, until golden, about 5 minutes. Add the garlic and stir until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Stir in the ginger, preserves, a pinch of cinnamon, and a pinch of red pepper flakes and bring to a simmer. Reduce the heat to very low and cook

for 3 minutes. Transfer to a bowl to cool.

2. Prepare a two-zone fire for medium heat (350° to 450°F).

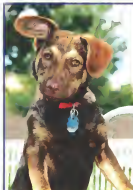
3. Brush the cooking grate clean. Place the soaked plank over *direct medium heat* and close the lid. After 5 to 10 minutes, when the plank begins to smoke and char, turn the plank over.

4. Set the Brie in the center of the plank and cook over *direct medium heat* with the lid closed, until the cheese softens and the rind turns a pale golden brown, about 10

minutes. Use a wide spatula to transfer the Brie to a serving plate.

5. Spoon half of the chutney over the cheese and top with the toasted almonds. Serve with bread or crackers and the remaining chutney on the side.

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Asparagus: a delicacy for centuries

One sure sign of spring - in there with the returing robins, and the blossoming cherry trees - is the return of asparagus to store shelves and farmers' markets.

It's a short season, since only the new shoots are tender enough to be eaten; if left, they become hard and woody.

There is evidence from ancient Egypt that *Asparagus* has been eaten by Man as early as 20,000 years before present. It was known in Spain, and used by the Greeks and Romans - not only as a delicacy that could be eaten fresh, but also dried, for winter use. It has popped up in cuisines around the world - including China and Vietnam.

And like many foods, asparagus came to be considered an aphrodisiac, probably because of the shape of the spears.

Aphrodisiac or not, *Asparagus officinalis* contains plenty of vitamins, little sodium, few calories, and is a good source of fibre, calcium, Magnesium and Zinc. It has been used not only as a food, but as a medicine - as an astringent cleanser, a diuretic, and a pick-me-up tonic.

Top producers are China, Peru, the U.S. and Mexico - but fortunately for Ontarians, there are plenty of local growers who can provide fresh asparagus in season.

Or why not grow your own? Asparagus is a perennial, that can live up to 20 years. All it needs is sun, well-drained soil, fertilizer and a weed-free bed, although



it will take at least 2 years to mature, before you can harvest the shoots.

In the meantime, here are some recipes that capture the unique taste of asparagus.

Asparagus 'Guacamole'

Ingredients:

- 1 ½ pounds asparagus, cut into small pieces
- 1 tablespoon fat-free Greek-style yogurt
- 1 tablespoon lime juice
- ¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 3 green onions, thinly sliced
- ½ jalapeno pepper, minced
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- 1 tomato, diced
- ½ teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 dash hot pepper sauce
- salt and ground black pepper to taste

Directions:

Place the asparagus into a steamer insert and set into a pot over one inch of water; bring the water to a boil. Place a cover on the pot and steam the asparagus for 5 minutes. Transfer the asparagus to the bowl of a food processor and puree until smooth.

Combine the asparagus puree with the yogurt, lime juice, cilantro, green onions, jalapeno pepper, garlic, tomato, Worcestershire sauce, and hot pepper sauce in a large bowl; gently stir to combine. Season with salt and pepper. Chill in refrigerator until completely cooled.

Be Gentle to Asparagus

To prepare asparagus, wash the vegetable by gently sloshing it up and down in a sink of cool water, gently rubbing the sand from the stalks with your fingers.

Asparagus needs to be cooked quickly to a tender-crisp texture. To gauge doneness, poke a stalk with a knife and you should feel a little resistance. Asparagus should be served warm or at room temperature as refrigeration dulls the flavor.

- It is imperative not to overcook asparagus.
- Remember, asparagus will continue to cook a bit, even after removed from boiling water. Asparagus readily adapts to other quick cooking methods, such as stir-fry and sauté. (*about.com*)

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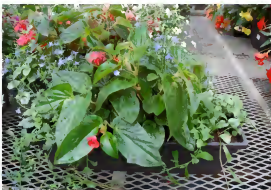
The key to container gardening

Frankie "Flowers" Ferragine uses this simple rule for perfect container planting: "Thriller, filler, spiller!" "Thriller" to provide the drama - the vertical movement of ornamental grasses, cana lilies, even sculpture to capture the eye.

"Filler" to provide substance in the container - coleus, sedum, geraniums, coral bells, etc. And "Spiller" to provide a fluid look, spilling over the sides of the pot, like wave petunia, ivy or potato vine.

Ferragine notes that containers can be used to transform any

space into a garden - from decks and patios, to difficult and neglected corners of the yard, containers can provide color, interest and punch.

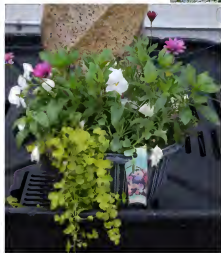


breathing space for the roots.

The pots can be expensive, especially since they need to be sturdy enough to withstand wind, and the occasional

knock. And even the toughest pot should be stored indoors during the winter, to avoid cracks and chips.

But the biggest challenge, says Francis Gallo, at Bradford Greenhouses Garden Gallery, is ensuring that the soil is the right



They can be changed instantly, to match the season.

They can serve a function- for example, raising herbs for use in the kitchen.

And containers can be used to curb the spread of potentially invasive species: The roots will spread no further than the hard boundary of the pot or planter.

But containers do have challenges. They do need regular watering, and tend to dry out quickly - but also can become over-wet, if there is insufficient drainage.

For plastic pots, it's an easy matter to drill drainage holes in the bottom - 5 holes for a 10" pot will do - but for ceramics, china or iron, the gardener will have to place coarse material on the bottom, such as gravel or broken crockery, to create



blend of peat, humus, sand, clay and fertilizer. Potting soils are great for indoor arrangements, but tend to be too light, and dry out too easily, for outdoor plantings. Instead, look for a patio planting soil.

That's the "#1 mistake... The main thing is using the right kind of soil!"

Frankie Flowers' newest book is "Pot It Up," focussing on container gardening year round - and creating incredible seasonal arrangements, in a simple garden centre pot. The book is available at Bradford Greenhouses.

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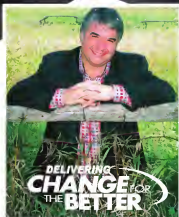
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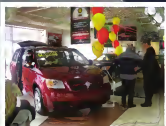


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